

LET'S PLAY!

Play is serious business for children!

Young children are always on the go. Whether it's running, climbing, dressing up, taking things apart or putting them back together again, they seldom sit still. While this sometimes chaotic activity may seem like "just play," it's anything but. The reality is there's much more happening beneath the surface.

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| What they're doing | What they're learning |
| Puzzles | Problem solving, concentration |
| Playing with blocks | Shapes, recognizing differences, logic |
| Playing dress up | Self expression, creativity, imagination |
| Running, jumping, climbing | How the body works, strength and flexibility |
| Games with friends | Social skills, taking turns and sharing |
| Singing and dancing | Listening, rhythm and coordination |
| Sand and water play | Solids, liquids, measurement |

Play helps stimulate children's intellectual growth. By engaging in different kinds of play, children learn how to reason, hypothesize, interact with one another. DSBN Kindergarten programs pair that with academic learning, such as numbers and letters, to help children build a powerful foundation for a successful school career. Best of all? They'll have fun doing it!



A horizontal banner for Rina Trepander Real Estate. It features a photo of Rina Trepander on the left, followed by the text 'Rina Trepander' in large red letters, 'Sales Representative', 'RE/MAX Assurance', and 'www.rinat.ca'. To the right is a red box containing 'Visit all Rina's listings' and 'www.rinat.ca'. Further right is contact information: '905-892-0222 • 905-734-4545', 'Direct 905-980-1199', 'E-mail: rina@myrpagenet.com', and '30 Years of Award Winning Real Estate Sales'. The banner is set against a background of a large, modern house with a pool and landscaping.

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Pelham NEWS

Published by Panmedia

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championship
action against
L.L. Crossley
on Saturday.
Centennial
won 35-33.
See story on
page 36.

UPFRONT

■ TIPS: Confidentiality of informants taken very seriously

Crime Stoppers needs better south Niagara profile

ALLAN REINER
Postmedia Network

Despite impressive statistics — such as \$33 million of illegal drugs taken off the streets, 3,450 crimes solved and 1,700 arrests — there's still room for improvement at Crime Stoppers, particularly in south Niagara.

Crime Stoppers board members Marilyn Davis and Ian Smith last week met with Mayor Frank Cappisano to raise awareness about the services during Crime Stoppers month.

Davis said the bulk of calls the agency receives are from communities such as St. Catharines and Niagara Falls, while people in south Niagara will proclaim, "our Welland and Port Colborne."

Now, she said, the organization is hoping to do a better job presenting itself in south Niagara, too.

"We don't have a lot of presence down here and that's what we're trying to promote, to make sure our presence in the Peel Catholic and Welland areas," she said.

Davis said she visited the Welland Farmers' Market in October to talk to people about the organization and to people, "trying to get the word out there."

Crime Stoppers effort still continues to receive no financial support from the city, "but a lot of calls generated from different parts of the region."

The woman at the Crime Stoppers office commented that the lack of financial support is presented as part of the organization's commitment



ALLAN REINER/Postmedia Network
Crime Stoppers board members Marilyn Davis, left, and Ian Smith, right, stand with Welland Mayor Frank Cappisano after hoisting the Crime Stoppers flag at Welland city hall. The organization is focusing on promoting its services in south Niagara communities, which has been lagging behind other parts of Niagara.

to the municipality of Niagara.

Confidentiality, she said, is something the organization takes very seriously.

"One of the original people who started in Crime Stoppers was told to testify, and he had the document in his hand [that identified the tipster] and he ate it in court," she said, laughing.

She referred to a March 2014 incident, when Mississauga County Crime Stoppers

personnel discovered Richard and Marissa was charged with conspiracy as a U.S. citizen for refusing to divulge details about an anonymous tip.

"When it comes to anything involving a tipster, it's something like that, we're very hairy about letting any information out at all," she said.

That confidentiality, she said, applies to the city, "but they say it's not just for us, they say it's for people who work for new programs like ours."

Confidentiality has been paid for in the past. In 2005, he said, "a lot of people have provided vital information about crimes who didn't want to be identified."

Less than 30 per cent of information about the rewards to which they're entitled.

"People just want to put off their names a lot of people do," Davis said. "Crime Stoppers is very sorry to help their confidants," he said. "Some people don't

CRIME STOPPERS OF NIAGARA

Accomplishments in
the past 30 years

1,933
arrests

3,340
cases cleared

\$80,580
rewards paid

\$5,903,260
in property recovered
\$30,775,020
in property recovered

even bother with the reward!"
For the majority of people who know about a crime, just having a clear conscience is enough motivation.

One crime Cappisano said he'd like solved is the aggravated battery of a van thief that targeted the city in recent months.

"Hopefully we'll get some calls on this in grad 10," he said. "There are people out there who know who's going to, so hopefully someone will come forward."

People can report crime by calling 1-800-222-TIPS online at www.winnipegcrimewatch.com or by text 219-937 (CRIME) and including the word NIAGARA in the message.

ALLAN REINER/Postmedia Network
Crime Stoppers

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LOCAL NEWS

■ MUNICIPAL AFFAIRS: Fonthill construction could start in August

Pelham poised to build \$37M multiuse complex

WAYNE CAMPBELL
For Postmedia Network

After more than a week of talking about it, construction of a Pelham multiuse complex could commence.

Pelham town councilors have agreed to put \$37 million into the municipality's 2016 capital budget for the undertaking.

A \$4.5-million capital budget was recommended by council's committee-of-the-whole Monday night.

The budget will go to a regular council meeting next week for approval.

Town councilor Papp had originally recommended the complex be for 2017.

Chief administrative officer Darren Ottaway said the \$37-million wedge would be used for start of miduse complex construction in August.

He said, approving the budget items does not mean the project is approaching the construction phase.

Council hasn't yet received a final design for a two-pool arena, gym, walking track and community centre in the design may come in March.

Council could reject it, Ottaway said.

Ward 3 Councillor Peter Papp said a lot of work has been done on the project so far.

The public is watching closely to be assured of the project's affordability.

Mayor Dave Augustyniak congratulated the process to bring the budget items forward.

The \$37 million in the 2015 budget is a projection for a marriage, he said. But it doesn't mean the project will start in 2016.

Papp said that in her 2016 operating budget presentation in a few weeks she will outline options on how to cover the \$37-million gap, which could be through debt or loans spread over a number of years. She will then also explain the effect on local taxes.

Meanwhile, Augustyniak said the town will continue to approach federal and provincial governments for grants for the community centre.

In addition to presenting the 2016 capital budget, Papp laid out projections for the next five, 10 and 20 years.

As she said, it depends on the pace of residential and commercial development in the new east Fonthill area. Until that is clear, projections will remain cloudy.

Another major item to the 2016 capital budget is \$2.47 million for an extension of Pelham Town Square east of St. George Street, which will be a larger and less expensive Fonthill ending at Erie Road.

Another project is a sidewalk along Regional Road 26 to St. George Street, ending at Erie Road.

The budget also sets aside \$700,000 for a public art feature at Erie Road and Regional Road 26, to welcome visitors to the town. One way sold is could involve a competition among artists.



Keep hydrants clear of snow

By keeping fire hydrants clear of snow, homeowners can save time and perhaps lives.

Pelham Fire Department is asking its residents to keep fire hydrants clear and accessible this winter, especially during snowstorms.

"It's a call every second year," said fire prevention officer Saska Holstek. "Being able to quickly connect a hydrant means the firefighters can start suppression sooner." Beyond hydrants, the purpose is to have a reliable on-hand water source, in case

arres, tanker trucks are used to supply water that is distributed to a portable pool.

Bereavement worker shares story of personal loss

After a career of working as a bereavement support facilitator, a Niagara woman is sharing her own story of a personal struggle with her mother.

In her book, titled *12 Months of Mourning and Recovery*, published by Firefly Press, Smithville resident Sandy McIvor writes about her own treatment of the Walter Cancer Centre in St. Catharines, where she had to say goodbye to her husband, Rick, in 2010.

Despite 25 years of working as a bereavement support facilitator and palliative care educator, McIvor said coping with her own loss was an ordeal.

The book is available for purchase online at the FireflyPress Bookstore, Amazon and most major online retailers. Also, it can be purchased from Bookstore Kobo, GooglePlay and the iTunes Bookstore.

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COMMENT

Help encourage 'social infrastructure' investments

You might recall that during the summer there were no grants available from the provincial or federal governments for quality of life investments like transit and health.

In July, I wrote that "since there are currently no federal or provincial grants available [for a potential new community centre], the town will continue to lobby for a policy change and more grants."

In short, I wrote to you and the town's efforts, writing "During this national election, please ask your local candidates to ensure that the Canadian government will take bold improvements to our quality of life and encourage more grants."

Since then, Canadians elected a new federal government. During the election cam-

paign, the Liberal party promised "Over the next decade, we will invest almost \$20 billion more in Canada's social infrastructure."

What did they mean by "social infrastructure"?

They meant investments that improve quality of life for millions of Canadians like investments in affordable housing, seniors' facilities, early learning and child care and cultural and recreational facilities.

This could mean great news for Pelham: It could help make our beloved community rooms more affordable. And it's one of the reasons why Pelham council recently earmarked \$37 million in the town's 2016 budget toward continuing a long-term priority.

You can help your federal and provincial grants only funded projects local councils already

included in their approved capital budgets.

Now, I am asking again for your help with our lobbying efforts. Last week federal Finance Minister Bill Morneau announced \$6.17 billion in funding commitments.

He "called upon Canadians to share their thoughts on how to better support the middle class, create jobs, and set the right conditions for long-term prosperity and innovation in our great country."

The federal government is seeking feedback from Canadians on a number of topics, including what infrastructure needs can best help grow the economy, protect our environment, and meet your priorities locally!

They are encouraging you to participate in federal government's budget consultations and suggest they help fund cultural

and recreational facilities with the provincial governments and municipalities.

Please check out their website at www.budget.ca/polls and follow the options for "Social Infrastructure" (including via Facebook and Twitter).

You can also write to Honourable Bill Morneau, Minister of Finance, Department of Finance Canada, 80 Bloor St., Ottawa, Ont. K1A 0L2.

With your help, we can encourage the federal government to help make social infrastructure investments — like a Pelham community centre — a priority and a reality.

You can contact Mayor Don Argue at mayor@pelham.ca or visit our website at www.pelhammayor.ca.



Calchas is shown in this undated photo.

Shipwrecks: Calchas burned after 26 years on the water

SHIP CALCHAS
For Postmedia Network

The British freighter Calchas was built at Bellary, Northern Ireland, and completed on July 13, 1949.

It had no name when it was built. It was given the name Calchas when it was sold to the Glyn Line Ltd. in 1952.

It may have been on a five-year charter, as in 1952 it was renamed Calchas, again for Glyn Line. It was sold to another arm of the Blue Funnel Line. After 26 years of never trading, the vessel finally came through the St. Lawrence Seaway in 1978, but this time it had been renamed Calchaz.

On July 10, 1979, Calchaz caught fire at Port Kaituma, Tasmania and became a total loss. The burning-out hull was raised in January 1980, arriving on Oct. 23, 1980, and broken up for scrap by the Keim Steel Mills & Sawmills Co.

LOCAL NEWS

■ **ABROAD:** Niagara native and photographer Erin Wilson has been living in Kurdish region of Middle Eastern country for past two years

Capturing hearts in Iraq

FRANKE REINHOLD
Postmedia Network

For a Niagara native living and working in Kurdish Iraq, watching children get recommended heart surgery has been overwhelming.

"Until consumers can get something like a heart transplant, that we as humans can open up a heart and with a needle seal a lead and fix it, and that that little person gets to grow up with an adult heart,"

The Crystal Reach centre has been living in Kurdish Iraq for more than two years and for the past year has been providing medical and surgical supports for non-profit Preemptive Love Coalition.

The organization was started after the war in Iraq, to aid a medical team that had arrived for children in need.

"A couple of young guys started them to try to make a difference and discovered there were a lot of kids waiting for heart surgery in Iraq," Wilson says. "Like 10,000 — I'm not talking a small amount, there's a huge backlog — and they had no idea where to start, so they could help tackle."

The backlog, Wilson says, is on the order of years or even the decade.

"I only have some of the highest rates of heart defects in the world — unfortunately, it's some of the highest rates of war. Modern warfare is horrific."

Children with congenital heart defects have been born and estimates in Iraq

and that includes the set, it pollutes the air and that's not helping the first generation of kids having really profound defects."

Wilson holds the role of communications director, writing stories and taking photographs to show the work being done by Preemptive Love, but has just recently started much research.

"I also work in the ICU when they're having a hard time after surgery and I get to hug baby sheep that are born for some of the emergency procedures. I mean, I get to hug the most adorable, displaced, war-torn, just precious sons of the horrors that they faced and try to process what it means to start life over again with a new heart."

"It's all pretty amazing."

Wilson came to the organization through a love of photography. The 30-year-old Niagara native has been using her skills to help start an other organization — the One Shot Project — which teaches photography to kids in the war.

She was introduced to the organization by Coalitions about the same time as ESG became a real threat.

"I was in Kurdistan doing something different, and all of a sudden, the organization came around to be filled with displaced families and with Syrian refugees and we all felt we needed to respond," she says. "And so I P.L.C. they started

"We're here, heart and surgery, we're here to do things, not just for the



ERIN WILSON / POSTMEDIA NETWORK

Erin Wilson

with the people from the area making up for it."

"It's all about reaching out and helping really beautiful people, and I mean it's a huge amount of work, and I do believe that at the same time, I'm in the middle of a whole lot of really wonderful, creative projects."

PLC's heart surgery program has expanded to Libya, Iraq, Nigeria and Pakistan. Wilson was in Libya last year, working on heart surgeries, and says the people she met there are so kind and giving, and they go back to Syria

and then while bodies are carrying the ones that are left by people from the West, that people care for them and will sacrifice to make sure that they can grow up."

Wilson has visited Iraq four times since she moved to Iraq more than two years ago.

While she says it was nice to be back with family and friends, she is starting to feel homesick, but has believed city in Iraq.

If she could send one message to Canadians, it would be to continue supporting organizations to refugees leaving Syria, and to take the time to research bad sentiments and wrong facts that cross through social media.

"The people that could make a difference, the people that are sponsored to cause, these are the educated, professional, hard-working people that would be the best people, that you can do that cause you're doing," Wilson says.

She says that she's there in Canada to "teach important things than people now or only an investment in Canada's future."

"I am very certain that whatever is being invented in this country right now is going to be the next big trade deal to Canada within a decade."

For more information on Wilson's work visit preemptivelove.org

holly.kern@postmedia.ca
Twitter: @hollykern

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RECREATION PROGRAMS & CLASSES

Drop-In Zumba Classes @ Pelham Arena
 Tuesday, January 19 9:30 – 10:30 am
 Tuesday, January 19 7:00 – 8:00 pm
 Wednesday, January 20 7:30 – 8:30 pm
 Thursday, January 21 10:00-11:00 am

Arena Programs

| Public Skating | Adult Public Skating | Adult/ Preschool | Men's Shiny Hockey | Women's Shiny Hockey | Women's Learn to Play Hockey | Pelham Home Games |
|------------------------------|-------------------------------|------------------------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|-------------------------|
| Sunday, Jan 17 1:00-2:20 pm | Thursday, Jan 21 1:00-2:00 pm | Tuesday, Jan 19 1:00-2:00 pm | Tuesday, Jan 19 8:00-9:00 am | Monday, Jan 18 8:00-9:45 am | Thursday, Jan 21 9:30-10:30 am | Tuesday, Jan 19 7:00 pm |
| Tuesday, Jan 19 4:00-5:00 pm | Adult Learn to Skate | Friday, Jan 22 9:00-11:00 am | Friday, Jan 22 9:00-10:00 am | Thursday, Jan 21 10:30-11:45 am | Hockey Skills Hour | vs. Ancaster |
| Friday, Jan 22 3:00-4:30 pm | Monday, Jan 19 1:00-2:00 pm | | | | Monday, Jan 18 11:00-12:00 pm | Friday, Jan 22 7:30 pm |
| | | | | | Thursday, Jan 21 2:00-3:00 pm | vs. Thorold |

Ballroom Dance Lessons



Mondays 7-8pm & 8-9pm
January 11 - March 21, 2016
 (no class Family Day, February 15)

\$80.00 per person/10 week session
 Adult couples or singles - all ages -
 no dance experience or partner required
 Casual attire

Register online with ActiveNet at pelham.ca

Call 905-892-2607 ext. 315
 or email recdept@pelham.ca

Old Pelham Town Hall (491 Chabot Road, Ridgeway)

The Town of Pelham is currently accepting applications for the following positions:

- Spring/Summer Employment Opportunities
- Casual Crossing Guard and Reserve Crossing Guard

Visit www.pelham.ca/career-opportunities for more information and to apply online.

CALL FOR MEMBERS

Pelham Summerfest Committee



Visit pelham.ca/clerks-department for application details.

For more info, contact (905) 892-2607 ext. 315.



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A comprehensive Safety Program That Prepares Children to Stay Home Alone

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Friday, January 15, 2016



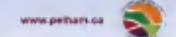
Safety in the Home for Children
 Course is 10 hours in 2 days. Course
 will run from 9:00 am-4:00 pm at the Pelham
 Arena, 1520 Main St. in Fonthill.

Course is available to children ages 6-12.
 Contact Julie Cook at julie.cook@pelham.ca or 905-892-2607 ext. 329.

Did you know?

Pelham Children's Services Committee is a top priority for all Town of Pelham Staff!

Your feedback is important to us. Please visit the Town of Pelham website to let us know how we are doing.



pelham.ca

It's Never too Late... to Learn to Skate!



Adults of any age can start skating with this program which is geared towards learning or improving on the basics of skating. Participants will be introduced to various skills involving moving forward and backward, gliding, stopping, turning and developing endurance. If you are interested in building your fundamentals or just want to learn to skate recreationally, then Adult Learn to Skate is for you!

Adult Learn to Skate
January 15, 2016
 Cost is \$65 for 10 weeks

Please note that all participants must wear a CSA approved hockey helmet. The Town of Pelham has a limited number that can be borrowed.

For more information contact
 Julie Cook at 905-892-2607
 ext. 329 or julie.cook@pelham.ca



LOCAL NEWS

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Send your gift to United Way South Niagara, 800 Niagara Street, Welland, Ontario L3C 5Z4 or visit unitedwaysouthniagara.ca today!

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■ RIDE TO CONQUER CANCER

Cyclists getting geared up for 200-km charity ride

MICHELLE ALLENBERG
Postmedia Network

A Niagara team is training for a two-day, 200-kilometre bike ride to raise money for Princess Margaret Cancer Centre.

Krysta Pratt and Debra Harrison, of Fonthill, are preparing to pedal past the 100-kilometre mark in the Ride to Conquer Cancer on Jan. 11 and 12. The women are part of a team that raise funds for cancer research and the Toronto cancer centre.

Pratt, 40, is a teacher at Fonthill Public School, and was the teacher without an unknown element at her school on Sunday, Jan. 24, at 9 a.m. A representative from the ride will be present to answer any questions about the event.

The event at Studio 28 will provide information about Princess Margaret Cancer Centre, which is one of the top five cancer research centres in the world. The team will be raising \$10,000 and the money raised will be used. There will also be tips given on how to fundraise and how to train.

Harrison said for anyone local who thinks Princess Margaret Cancer Centre doesn't meet them, the research foundation helps all Canadians.

"If there is breakthrough research, it's not just going to be for Canadians. It's going to be for the world. The money we raise at 100 km is to make sure we've got the best cancer care we've got in our country and it's going to be shared," Harrison said.

There will be five spinning classes offered at the information event. The first will begin at 9:30 a.m., and the second at 10:30 a.m. 45-minute classes will be an opportunity for people to interact and get an idea of what to expect if they decide to participate.

Pratt told the five spinning classes are meant to encourage people to participate.



PRINCESS MARGARET CANCER CENTRE

Krysta Pratt, leader of the Two Fonthill cycling team training for the 2006 Ride to Conquer Cancer, will speak at the information event about the event later this month.

"People think 'I can't do that,' but you totally can. You have seven or eight members who did it and completed it. It's really great event and it's well done and so well-organized," Pratt said.

Pratt said the team has a team of seven or eight riders who for the first time made the long-haul route in 2015.

There are multiple routes from which to choose, including a Toronto to Niagara Falls route. The team has 100 slots to participate in the Ride to Conquer Cancer. Registration isn't yet available, but the team is preparing for any ride conditions possible.

"They don't know what the ride is, so you don't know how hard the ride will be. We go east and west. We don't know how hard the hills are going to be," said Harrison.

There will be two free spinning classes offered at the information event. The first will begin at 9:30 a.m., and the second at 10:30 a.m. 45-minute classes will be an opportunity for people to interact and get an idea of what to expect if they decide to participate.

michelle.allenberg@postmedia.com

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LOCAL NEWS

■ VACATIONS: Some all-inclusive packages still low priced; day trips more popular now

Travellers adapting to impact of the low loonie

BONI FRASER
Postmedia News

For some heart-seeking travellers, venturing outside travel agents is the best way to get a last-second vacation shock.

"Some are telling me, 'I found this great deal on some online mega sites,'" said Rita Lashman, manager of Veracruz's St. Catharines Travel & Cruise. "I'll say, 'you do know that's in U.S. dollars?'

"But recently, I had one customer come in and said, 'you're telling a Canadian exchange rate of \$1.13, it's now \$1.48 — that's huge,'" she said.

With the loonie trading below 75 cents US for the last week, that amounts to a nearly 40 per cent markup in a typical exchange. That's roughly a 13 per cent increase over the annual average.

It could eventually mean a big price hike for travel packages and plans based on American dollar currencies.

However, if you work with a good travel agent will advise you there are still some sweet deals with all-inclusive vacation packages. Specifically, they said, the number of last-minute travel operators made available by the loonie's free-fall.

"People are getting some really good deals," said Lashman. "There are some packages we've written as long ago, and they have not been impacting us in those currency exchanges in the last few days," she said. "But prices are liable to change continually now."

"If you see a great bargain, you need to jump on it. And if you wait with a reputable Canadian travel agent, they'll tell you that," said Lashman, a veteran in the industry.

Meanwhile, a report last year from the Canadian Travel and Tourism Board forecasted that this trend — lower gasoline have convinced Canadians to vacation closer to home this year. It said the average trip is expected to continue this year.

Following an increase of 2.8 per cent this year, overnight travel within Canada is expected to grow by another 2.4 per cent in 2016.

American write in Canada.



Rita Lashman, manager of Veracruz's St. Catharines Travel & Cruise, talks about how the sinking Canadian dollar is affecting travel plans.

powered by the strong U.S. dollar, are expected to rise as well.

The survey, reported by the Canadian Press, showed by year's end, 40 per cent of Canadians who travel to the U.S. will have spent more per capita in the first half of 2016 than they spent the same period the previous year.

Canada is among the top American destinations for international travellers, including one in five Canadians who cross the border annually, according to the 2015 travel to Canada survey. The same year, travel from Canada to the States was declining.

Meanwhile, Frost, owner of Pelham Post Travel in St. Catharines, said more Canadian travellers who regularly go down south are still going, for shorter stays.

"We are still finding that last-minute packages are making from them to the sport motor than Ruffels," said the 25-year travel industry veteran. "When going to Plachetka Las Vegas, you are more likely to go through Ruffels."

Meanwhile, others are sim-

ply deciding trips to America or an U.S. dollar-priced destination by next month.

"Right now we're dealing with someone who was originally going to the U.S. and they're going to drive," said Frost. "Now they're about to book an all-inclusive in the Caribbean."

Frost said Cuban trips remain another hot market that's been relatively unaffected as far as the Canadian dollar is going.

Most of these packages are being paid in Canadian dollars.

"This is actually one of the

biggest U.S. travel

destinations," said Frost.

"It's up there with the

U.S. and Mexico."



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■ NIAGARA REGION: Update provided on cease to qualify rule initiative

No evictions since housing change

MARYANNE FIRTH
Penticton Nickel

No evictions have taken place since Niagara Regional Housing last implemented its cease to qualify rule last spring, which discourages tenants paying market rent to leave.

A breakdown of the status of the 170 households impacted as a result of the change was provided to Niagara Region's public health and social services committee.

The decision to move market tenants out of affordable housing was made to help alleviate the area's lengthy waitlist.

Under the Housing Services Act, tenants who became ineligible for rent-guided-to-income (RGI) can stay and pay maximum rent, unless otherwise known as market rent, for 12 months. The rule has not previously been enforced by NRH.

The organization mailed out letters to 170 affected households explaining the change and providing a moving guide.

Of the 170 letters sent out, 68 households have since requalified for RGI, 43 have moved or given notice and 42 have an outcome that is still pending as of Jan. 12.

In addition, four tenants were deemed overhoused and agreed to move to a smaller unit; two were down-sized; 10 households were determined to be well over the maximum allowed for their income; and 10 households were moved to affordable housing and accommodations were made for 11 households with extenuating circumstances, including terminally ill elderly tenants.

As of Jan. 12, 103 households have taken place and 42 impacted tenants have been in contact with housing.

"Our goal is to have the right people in our housing that really need it," Niagara regional social officer Lilia Mironova said.

Housing's website, as of Dec. 31, lists 4,600 households. That number is up four per cent over December 2014.

While he felt a more sensitive

approach to the situation could have been taken, Fort Erie Mayor Wayne Redekop said NRH did what it is required to do.

"For every person in one of those units who ought not to be there, there's 10 families outside in need of that type of housing," he said.

With 1,400 people, Marshall talked with tenants who were understandably experiencing larger costs, or requesting information that would keep them from qualifying for affordable housing.

"It's not a birthright to get into these houses," he said.

At the same time, he felt concern for seniors who were being asked to move from units in which some have lived for decades.

He questioned why regional council's proposed moratorium, which came forward in October and would have put a stay on evictions until June 30, 2016, was not approved by the board of directors.

The board, however, said, felt "pushing a moratorium on that at this point was not necessary" due to the timeline required by the eviction process.

Because evictions can and often do take several weeks, according to the TRH board, it can take several weeks or even months to come to a resolution, she said.

A review of notices, and since January, has required before a board hearing, which also takes time, a schedule can be requested.

The earliest anyone could potentially be evicted from the impacted group is May 1, 2016.

While the board was aware of the timeline required by the eviction process, that offered no assistance to impacted tenants to help lessen their stresses, Marshall said.

Details on the cease to qualify initiative will be provided to council going forward.

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ENTERTAINMENT

B-52s will roar into Fallsview in April

Now wave goodbye! The B-52s are heading to the Fallsview Casino April 25.

Best known for classic tunes Shakin' Rock Lobster and Love Shack, the Atlanta, Georgia, group performs April 25 at 9 p.m. Tickets are \$45.

Also performing April 26 in Fallsview are Solid Gold Motown (8 p.m.); Michael Jackson's Smooth Criminal (8 p.m.); and the band that preceded the man of Solid Gold Motown (8 p.m.).

Tickets for all shows are on sale now at the Fallsview box office and at Ticketmaster online: www.ticketmaster.ca.

LOCAL NEWS

■ HOPE CENTRE: Agency aims to provide longer-term assistance for homeless people

'They'd go from shelter to shelter' for help

ALLAN RUBIN
Postmedia Network

As frigid weather returns to Niagara, Hope Centre is doing its part to ensure no one is being left in the cold.

"We have available spaces available to serve anyone that's in need," said Hope Centre executive director Mark Card.

Despite changes to the agency's homeless programs, it's not the shelter of choice for many old-timers at Hope House near Niagara Falls, said Hope Centre executive director Mark Card.

Program administrator Brenda Langen says the changes implemented at Hope House since the changes were kick-knocking on the door soon after that 28-day stay ended.

"They'd go from shelter to shelter, and then they'd be back here," she says.

But the need for a continuing stay at Hope House is the agency's working to address the underlying problems that keep them coming back.

Although it says at the former Hope House at 116 Division St., it's been reduced to 20 beds, the agency has confirmed that hotel rates at a 14-bed institutional housing facility last March when classes can now stay for up to one year. During that time, Hope Centre will work with clients to resolve problems that led them to

become homeless in the first place.

"It's more than just a temporary bed for the night," Card says. "We're asking them to stay longer to try to help people to kind of get back on their feet."

Langen says the change allows "more of a permanent home for them, instead of 'You have to get out of here in 30 days and go somewhere else.'"

At the very least, keep them here and their supports are here. It's really positive that they, they don't have to go anywhere else."

Some of the assistance offered at the transitional housing facility include life skills, budgeting classes, mental health service referrals, employment help and counseling.

Meanwhile, Card says people in need of emergency shelter are being housed at a facility in Niagara Falls.

Hope Centre has set up the Welland area hotel rooms for people in need of temporary accommodations.

Given that, people who need additional support can stay with the transitional housing facility for further assistance.

Hope Centre also provides free meals to people in need of emergency shelter who have medical health support for a total of 25 options for people struggling with homelessness.

Additional beds were added to homeless shelters in neighbouring com-



ALLAN RUBIN/POSTMEDIA NETWORK
Hope Centre's program administrator Brenda Langen and executive director Mark Card say changes implemented for homelessness programs are improving the lives of its clients.

munities. Five more beds were added to homeless shelters in St. Catharines and 18 more beds were added to a facility in Niagara Falls.

Before the changes were made, Card says, many of the people staying at Hope House were from St. Catharines and Niagara Falls, because of the expansion of facil-

ties in the neighbouring communities, people were more likely to stay elsewhere to have a home.

Card says the changes to the program have been "slow moving" getting it all going, but it's up and running and it's working really well.

And there's already a growing number of families moving down

to the neighbouring communities, people are more likely to stay elsewhere to have a home.

Card says the changes to the program have been "slow moving" getting it all going, but it's up and running and it's working really well.

"We're pretty proud of the way we've recharged our homelessness services," he says.

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LOCAL NEWS

■ **TRIBUNE BOYS BASKETBALL TOURNAMENT:** Centennial edges E.L. Crossley in a battle between friends and coaching colleagues



E.J. Crossley & Davis Shepard, No. 8, gang up for a basket against Cedric Neal in Tribune Boys' Basketball Tournament consolation championship action Saturday night in Wellwood.

‘Fantastic game’ decides consolation title

THE BORG PRACTICE

Good things don't only come in threes.

After scoring nine three-pointers in a 15-point victory over the E.L. Crowley Cyclones early in the season, the Centennial Cougars took a more conventional route to the state's circle in the results in the Tribune Boys Basketball Tournament consolation championship Saturday night in Midland.

Though their outside game was taken away for the most part, with only three of their attempts from beyond the arc going in, the Cougars defended well and controlled

the ball — especially in the
late going — for a 36-33 vic-
tory.

In the championship final, A. N. Myer of Notre Dame knocked off Notre Dame of Welland 39-41.

In the tournament, Connor Goldiffe paced Centennial in points with 16. Ethan Sac, the Cougars player of the game, and Jacob Bryn, a Grade 9 student called up from the junior team for the tournament, each scored seven and Ivy Clayton

Chris Holmes netted a game-high 12 points for the Cyclones. Ben Karchman, Crossley's player of the game,

Sad said the Cougars didn't allow the ease of their first

game of the season against Cranley got in the way of executing a defense-first game plan in the rematch.

He said Gresham couldn't afford to let up against the

Cyclone, a division rival and a team coached by Doug Anderson, a one-time assistant to Cougars head coach Phil Moxley.

That was Mosley's answer.

"This was a fantastic game, they gave us all that we can handle," said Mosley, who spent two years coaching basketball with Alphonso at Hislop.

Facing her friend and close colleague isn't exactly like playing a mirror image of *Central's* own, Mosley said. "We may not have the same

Turner was hurt the Cyclosportive, who were seeking to stop a four-game losing streak.

A Crossley victory in the consolation final wouldn't have been an upset as far as

"We've got to take care of the ball," Atchison said. "Other than that, I thought we were in a better place, and I think we're in a better place now."

Salchman and the Cyclones had to smother the Cougars on defense if they wanted to avoid a repeat of the 1974 per-

"We had to play tight and take away the ball. We couldn't allow them to touch anyone," the Grade 11 student said.

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